

Message Text

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67

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-06 IO-10 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NEA-09 NSAE-00 OPIC-03

SP-02 TRSE-00 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 SAM-01

STR-01 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 /083 W

----- 099664

R 191821Z FEB 75

FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8315

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 0362

AMEMBASSY LISBON

USNATO BRUSSELS 3561

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECIN, EEC, PO

SUBJECT: EC COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT SOAMES' VISIT TO
PORTUGAL

REF: A) LISBON 861

B) EC BRUSSELS 9502 (1974)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: AN EC COMMISSION OFFICIAL WHO ACCOMPANIED SOAMES ON HIS LISBON TRIP EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE EC GROUP'S VISIT TO PORTUGAL. JOINT WORKING GROUPS WILL SOON START DISCUSSIONS OF COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, AND FINANCIAL MATTERS, AND THE EC MAY BE ABLE TO ANNOUNCE SOME SPECIFIC MEASURES TO ASSIST THE PORTUGUESE SOMETIME IN APRIL. END SUMMARY.

2. DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL RELATIONS DE KERGORLAY, WHO ACCOMPANIED EC COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT SOAMES ON HIS FEBRUARY 12-13 VISIT TO LISBON (REFTEL A), TOLD MISSION OFFICERS THAT THE TRIP HAD "GONE WELL." THE EC TEAM HAD A FULL SCHEDULE
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WITH MEETINGS BEGINNING IN THE EARLY MORNING AND LASTING UNTIL

LATE IN THE EVENING AND MUCH GROUND WAS COVERED. ALTHOUGH SOAMES WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO MAKE ANY MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENTS IN HIS FEBRUARY 13 PRESS CONFERENCE IN LISBON DE KERGORLAY BELIEVES THAT IT SERVED A POSITIVE PURPOSE BY DEMONSTRATING INTEREST AND SUPPORT ON THE PART OF A SENIOR EC COMMISSION OFFICIAL.

3. DE KERGORLAY REPORTED THAT THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT HAD JUST PASSED LEGISLATION SETTING UP A GROUP WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT TO DEAL WITH THE EC. (APPARENTLY UP TO NOW, THE PORTUGUESE WERE DEALING WITH THE EC ON A STRICTLY AD HOC BASIS.) EVEN WITH THE NEW GROUP, HOWEVER, DE KERGORLAY DOES NOT EXPECT ANY CONCRETE AGREEMENTS PRIOR TO THE APRIL ELECTIONS. HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THIS IS NECESSARILY A BAD THING. THE ELECTION ISSUES ARE DOMESTIC AND IN DE KERGORLAY'S VIEW ANY ANNOUNCEMENT OF EC ASSISTANCE MADE JUST PRIOR TO THE ELECTION WOULD NOT RECEIVE MUCH NOTICE. ON THE OTHER HAND, AFTER THE ELECTION, THE COUNTRY WILL HAVE TO FOCUS INCREASINGLY ON ITS DOMESTIC PROBLEMS AND THE QUESTION OF EC SUPPORT WILL ASSUME INCREASING IMPORTANCE.

4. THE CURRENT TIMETABLE CALLS FOR DISCUSSIONS IN BRUSSELS BETWEEN A JOINT PORTUGUESE-EC WORKING GROUP ON COMMERCIAL QUESTIONS IN EITHER LATE FEBRUARY OR EARLY MARCH. LATER IN MARCH THE TWO SIDES WILL TAKE UP INDUSTRIAL ISSUES AND THE QUESTION OF A FINANCIAL PROTOCOL. DE KERGORLAY SAYS THE MIXED COMMITTEE WILL MEET SOMETIME IN APRIL AND APPROVE A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC MEASURES. DE KERGORLAY SAID HE HIMSELF INTENDS TO GO TO LISBON EVERY COUPLE OF MONTHS TO KEEP IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF EC-PORTUGUESE RELATIONS.

5. DE KERGORLAY SAID THE PORTUGUESE HAD BEEN ONLY SLIGHTLY MORE SPECIFIC IN THEIR REQUESTS THAN AT PREVIOUS MEETINGS. ON THE INDUSTRIAL AND FINANCIAL SIDE, THE PORTUGUESE HOPE THE EC (AND THE MEMBER STATES) WILL BE ABLE TO LEND HELP TO PROJECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PORTUGAL'S INFRASTRUCTURE, PARTICULARLY THROUGH GUARANTEEING INVESTMENTS. HE REITERATED, HOWEVER, THAT DIRECT EC FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WAS SOME WAY OFF SINCE A FINANCIAL PROTOCOL WOULD HAVE TO BE RATIFIED BY ALL MEMBER STATES (REFTEL B). IN THE COMMERCIAL AREA, THE PORTUGUESE RAISED THE ISSUE OF IMPORT QUOTAS ON EC PRODUCTS IN ORDER TO PROTECT PORTUGUESE INFANT INDUSTRIES, BUT IMPROVED ACCESS FOR PORTUGUESE EXPORTS CONTINUES TO BE THEIR PRIMARY OBJECT.

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GREENWALD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VICE PRESIDENT, VISITS, REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ECBRU01421
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750059-1061
From: EC BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750233/aaaabdao.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LISBON 861
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 APR 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <19 MAY 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EC COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT SOAMES' VISIT TO PORTUGAL
TAGS: ECIN, PO, EEC, (SOAMES, CHRISTOPHER)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006